



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Entered as second-class matter November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 1, 1879

VOL. X

NEW YORK, MAY 14, 1917

No. 27

NOTES ON VERGIL

Aeneid 1.694; 1.478; 1.636

Editorial

(1) Some time ago I received the following letter:

I have reached again, in my teaching of Vergil, Aeneid 1.694, and I am once more impressed with the difficulty of rendering that line satisfactorily. As the marjoram is a small plant of the mint family, in what way can it suggest shade? Your note does not touch upon this difficulty, nor does any of the editions of Vergil to which I have access.

On looking the matter up, in many different editions, I found that my correspondent was right about the editors.

It makes no real difference how the *syntax* of this passage is explained. It matters little whether (1) we say that *dulci adspirans* . . . *umbra* helps to express the means of *amaracus* . . . *complectitur*, and so may be joined by *et* to the instrumental ablative *floribus*, with the added explanation that *et* and *que* are frequently used to unite expressions which, though unlike in form, are alike in meaning and function, or (2) we regard *et* as joining only *floribus* and *dulci* . . . *umbra*, which in turn are taken together with *adspirans*. The meaning clearly is that the *amaracus* had flowers and threw shade.

On the latter matter, the *umbra* of the *amaracus*, I found just one thing which gave any help at all: Robinson Ellis's note on Catullus 61.6-7, *cinge tempora floribus suave olentis amaraci*, part of the address to Hymenaeus.

Ellis's note runs as follows:

Columella indeed seems to imply that *amaracus* had a conspicuous flower; for he combines it with *narcissus* and *pomegranate blossom* (*balaustium*), and this after a simile in which he compares the bright children of the gardens with the moon, *Sirius*, *Mars*, *Hesperus* and the rain-bow (x. 288-297). Both Catullus and Vergil also speak of the *flowers* of *amaracus* (Aen. i. 694), and Vergil, like Columella, implies that it was a plant of some height (*umbra*). If, then, *amaracus* was *marjoram*, it must have been an exotic, indeed an oriental variety, hardly comparable with the plant known in the colder parts of Europe. . . .

In Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, under *Amarakos*, 2, P. Wagler, writing in 1894, held that *amaracus* was probably *Origanum Majorana* L., something different from our *marjoram*, which, he says, was brought from

Arabia to Italy in the fourteenth or the fifteenth century. He says it did not commonly grow wild, but was cultivated in gardens: this latter statement rests on Pliny the Elder (21.176). Wagler does not, however, anywhere describe it, with reference, I mean, to its size. In Pliny's description of *amaracus* (21.59, 61, 67, 176, etc.) I find nothing about its size. To-day *marjoram* plants grow two feet high. If a lot of such plants were growing together, as they were evidently growing in Venus's grove, then, even if we assume the identity of our modern plant with the ancient *amaracus*, we may say that a child or young boy could be laid among them, and they would envelop him with *umbra* and *odor*. The Britannica¹ says that wild *marjoram*, a perennial common in dry copses and on hedge-banks, has many stout stems 1 to 3 feet high.

One thing is plain. Whatever plant Vergil meant, he meant something big enough to give shade. It may be noted here that Vergil's myrtle was different from our myrtle, at least in Aeneid 3.23 (see the editors there).

(2) Another correspondent asked my opinion of the following note, copied from an old edition, on Aeneid 1.478:

Versa pulvis inscribitur hasta. Non hasta Troili, quam adhuc manu retineret; nam amissis armis, id est dilapsis, ferebatur: et sola lora manu implicata retinebat. Igitur hasta Achillis, quae per Troili pectus adacta, et cum eo resupino inversa, ferro pulverem sulcabat¹.

The interpretation of *versa* . . . *hasta*, given in this note, is possible only if Troilus was hit in the back while running away. If he was hit in the breast, and, as in the picture given by Vergil, he was *resupinus*, flat on his back, then the point of the spear, not the butt, would be writing in the dust.

It would seem that the unknown editor cited by my correspondent was bothered by the words *amissis* . . . *armis*, 474. If, however, we take verses 474-478, as a whole, as we are in duty bound to do, and then recall that common characteristic of Vergil's narrative style, the characteristic which I have ventured to call Vergil's "indirection" (see the Introduction to my edition, § 225, and the references under the caption Indirection, in the Index, page 552), we shall see that in 474, when he wrote *amissis* . . . *armis*, Vergil meant *armis extra* (or *praefer*) *hastam amissis*.

¹The edition was not named. It was merely described as published in New York in 1822, and as having all its notes in Latin.

Surely we get far finer pathos if we understand *hasta*, in 478, of Troilus's own spear. The spear on which, poor foolish lad, he had relied, even against Achilles is now writing in the dust! Even in death he clings with his left hand to the reins (his car, part of his warlike equipment), and with his right hand he clings to his spear: the point of the spear is, not in Achilles's heart, but in the dust.

To the note in my edition I may add a few words here. As Troilus fell over backwards, facing his foe, part of his body was somehow caught in (by) the car; his head struck the ground. In the picture Vergil is describing, he lies on his back. As his (frightened) horses drag him along, his right hand, fastened with a death grip to his spear, flies back full length, its point up, its butt writing in the dust.

In Silius Italicus, an imitator of Vergil, 4.254 ff., we have a passage mayhap based on Aeneid 1.474-478. There a man

rapitur . . . pavore
tractus equi, vinctis conexa ad cingula membris.
Longa cruor sparso liquit vestigia campo,
et tremulos cuspis ductus in pulvere signat.

This gives, in part, the same picture as most editors find in Vergil's lines.

(3) Another correspondent, who described himself as taking a Summer Session course in a certain College, wrote taking issue with the instructor in that course, who had translated *dii* in Aeneid 1.636 in two different ways, (1) as the genitive singular of *dies*, and (2) as the nominative plural of *deus*. Neither translation seemed to the student to give a good sense. He declared that he had himself solved the difficulty, by supplying *mittunt* as the verb to *dii*, taken as the nominative plural of *deus*. He thought it reasonable to supply *mittunt* in 636, because *mittit* occurs in 633. Against this suggestion, however, lie two objections, both serious. In the first place, if *mittunt* be supplied, we have a troublesome case of asyndeton between *mittit* in 633 and *mittunt* in 636. In the second place, the whole passage takes on an extraordinary aspect, because we have Vergil saying that Dido sent to the shores certain things (named in detail), but that the gods sent the *munera laetitiaque*! For what purpose, then, one may ask, did Dido send the *lauri*, the *sues*, the *cum matribus agni*?

Conington read *dei* and construed it as the genitive singular of *deus*; he regards the whole phrase *munera laetitiaque dei* as equivalent to *vinum*. This seems to me a curiously awkward and un-Vergilian description of wine. To see how unclear a description this would be we have only to turn back to Aeneid 1.214-215. In adopting this reading and explanation, Conington was anticipated, as it happens, by Servius.

We have strong ancient testimony in support of the reading *dii*, as the genitive singular of *dies*, in this verse. That testimony comes in part from Gellius 9.14. 1-20, especially 8 (in illo versu [= Aen. 1.636] non dubium est quin *dii* scripserit <Vergilius> pro *diei*), in

part from Servius. Servius mentions three readings, *dei* (which he explains as equal to *Liberi patris*), *dii*, and *die*; he interprets both *dii* and *die* as the genitive singular of *dies*.

I cannot agree at all with Conington's dictum that "it would be difficult to affix any precise sense to the line if '*dii*' were read". What objection is there to the translation 'as gifts wherewith to enjoy the day'? The use of an appositive expression to denote purpose is too common to require illustration here. If one asks what sort of a genitive *dii*, regarded as the genitive singular of *dies*, is, I should imitate the careful procedure of Professor Bennett in his important work, *The Syntax of Early Latin*, 2.70-79, where, with pedagogical discretion, he groups "very many combinations of the genitive with nouns which fall under no one category, but represent a great variety of relations" under the caption *Free Uses of the Genitive with Nouns*. I say, with no sense of shame at all, that there are many case-constructions, particularly of the genitive and of the ablative, which I do not find it easy, to put the matter mildly, to enter under any one of the recognized categories. It is enough in such cases to remember that the proper business of the genitive, especially in Latin, is to modify a noun. C. K.

THE BOY ASCANIUS

Undoubtedly Aeneas is the hero of the Aeneid, as Vergil intended him to be, and the master spirit in the development of the great epic of the Romans. Yet, we are forced to admit, after a careful study, that Ascanius, his son, is the little hero, second only in importance to the father, cheering, comforting and inspiring him, even sharing with him, whenever possible, joys and sorrows. As the babe in Tennyson's *Princess* revives the spark of motherhood in the unnatural princess and as little Eppie in Silas Marner kindles within the old miser a new affection for those around him, so 'the boy Ascanius' is the impelling and compelling personality behind the father, without whom there could hardly have been any *pious Aeneas*, 'tossed about on land and sea', and experiencing every peril and misfortune that he might establish the Latin race and lay the foundations of mighty Rome.

To show that 'the boy Ascanius' is the impelling and compelling personality working throughout the poem and inspiring the father to do and to dare for the sake of his dear son and for the future greatness of Rome is the purpose of this character study. Aeneas and Dido have been thoroughly exploited as factors in the Aeneid—Aeneas as a type of a Trojan-Roman warrior, pious, patriotic, God-fearing, and Dido as a type of an Oriental queen, emotional, passionate, fatalistic, but 'the boy Ascanius' has never received the consideration which he deserves in the study of Vergil's masterpiece.

In the poem he is mentioned by name no less than seventy times and he is referred to in several other instances. The total number of instances involved is